

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 214582

51

ORIGIN EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 DODE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-20

/100 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/CE:RWBECKER:FPS

APPROVED BY EUR: WSTABLER

EUR/CE: NCLEDSKY

EUR/CE: SGEORGE

L/EUR: DHSMALL

DOD/ISA: COL. PARR

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P R 311949Z OCT 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION BERLIN PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 214582

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, WB

SUBJECT: PUBLICATION OF BIRD'S HESS BOOK

REF: (A) BERLIN 1814 (B) STATE 175812, 9/26/72 (C) STATE
216772, 11/30/72

1.DEPTOFF TELEPHONED EXECUTIVE EDITOR VIKING PRESS POLLACK
OCTOBER 24 AND LEARNED VIKING PLANNING PUBLISH BIRD'S
BOOK IN MAY OR JUNE 1974. BIRD LISTED AS SOLE AUTHOR.
BOOK, WHICH RETAINS TITLE "THE LONELIEST MAN IN THE WORLD,"
APPROXIMATELY 280 PAGES. THIS APPARENTLY HALF THE SIZE
OF MANUSCRIPT DESCRIBED IN REFTEL C. VIKING SAID BOOK
MAKES EXTENSIVE USE OF HESS TAPES BUT DOES NOT DISCUSS
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PAGE 02 STATE 214582

WHAT HAPPENS WITH HESS OR SPANDAU UPON HIS DEATH.

2. BIRD APPARENTLY TOLD VIKING THAT USG HAD NO OBJECTION TO PUBLICATION OF BOOK. AS RESULT OF DEPARTMENT INQUIRY, HOWEVER, VIKING ASKED IF BIRD HAD EVER SIGNED ANY DOCUMENT OR IN ANY OTHER WAY AGREED NOT TO USE HIS POSITION AS US DIRECTOR AT SPANDAU FOR PERSONAL GAIN. DEPTOFF ADVISED POLLACK THAT BIRD HAD SIGNED DECLARATION AT OUTSET OF DUTIES IN 1964 STATING HE WOULD NOT SEEK GAIN ADVANTAGE IN ANY WAY FROM HIS OFFICIAL POSITION (REF B). POLLACK ASKED WHETHER DEPARTMENT WOULD PROVIDE VIKING WITH COPY OF THAT DECLARATION TO ASSIST IT IN DETERMINING WHETHER IT MIGHT IN ANY WAY AFFECT PUBLICATION OF

BIRD BOOK.

3. AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, DEPARTMENT BELIEVES IT WOULD BE MISTAKE TO ATTEMPT TO SUPPRESS BOOK SINCE IT UNLIKELY PUBLICATION COULD BE SUCCESSFULLY AND QUIETLY BLOCKED IN ALL THREE COUNTRIES MAKING EFFORT STOP PUBLICATION IN US POINTLESS. SIMILARLY, WHILE LEGAL ACTION AGAINST BIRD A POSSIBILITY, IT WOULD NOT STOP PUBLICATION AND COULD GIVE BIRD AND HIS BOOK UNDESIRABLE PUBLICITY. DEPARTMENT THEREFORE PRESENTLY INCLINED TAKE NO ACTION AGAINST BIRD OR PUBLICATION OTHER THAN PROVIDING VIKING WITH THE INFORMATION REQUESTED. HOWEVER, WE WISH TO RESERVE FINAL JUDGMENT UNTIL AFTER RECEIVING REPORTS ON ALLIED REACTIONS TO PUBLICATION PLANS. SHOULD ALLIES AGREE THAT PUBLICATION CANNOT BE STOPPED, DEPARTMENT BELIEVES SOVIETS SHOULD BE INFORMED OF BIRD'S PUBLICATION PLANS DRAWING ON INFORMATION CONTAINED PARA 1 ABOVE AND REFTELS B AND C.

4. PLEASE AIRPOUCH COPY OF DECLARATION SIGNED BY BIRD IN 1964 (REF B). KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE214582
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: RWBECKER:FPS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS STABLER
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973101/aaaaaaqk.tel
Line Count: 95
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A) BERLIN 1814 (B) STATE 175812, 9/, 26/72 (C) STATE
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02-Aug-2001 by boyleja>; APPROVED <07 MAR 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PUBLICATION OF BIRD'S HESS BOOK
TAGS: PGOV, WB
To: BERLIN
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005